Vol. III
of X

NOV 88
$2.00 US
$2.95 CAN

V FOR VENDETTA

By Alan Moore
and David Lloyd

Suggested
For Mature
Readers

V FOR VENDETTA™

By **Alan Moore** and **David Lloyd**

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V FOR VENDETTA 3
Published monthly by DC Comics Inc.,
666 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10103.
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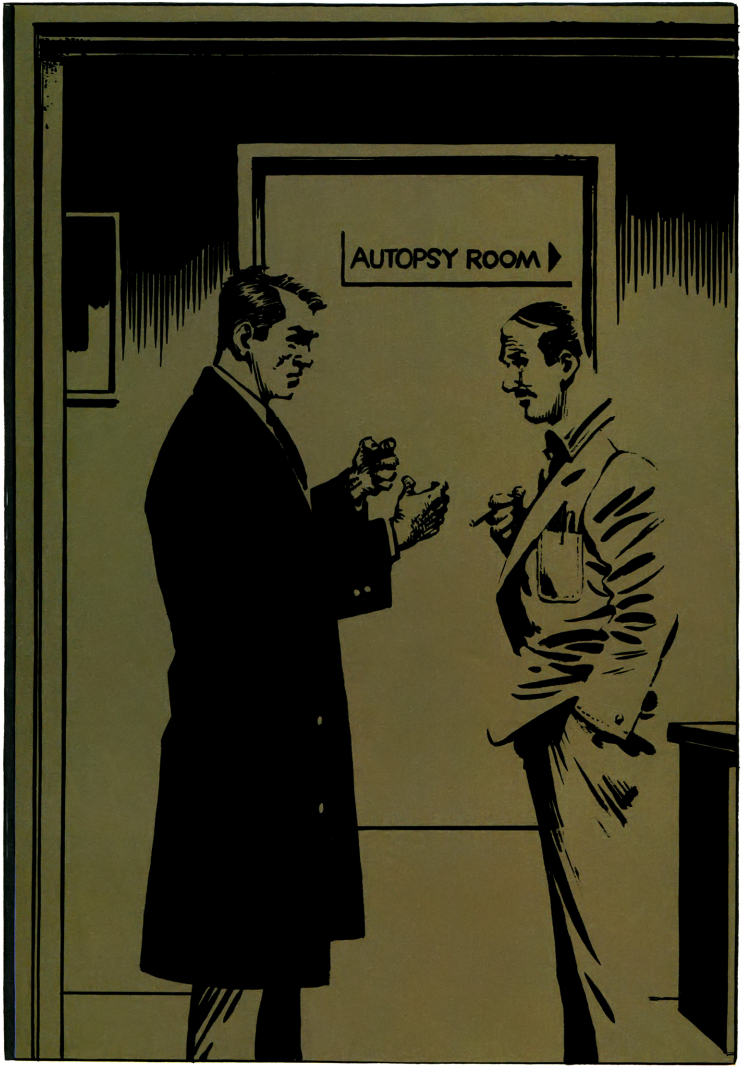
Printed in Canada.

V FOR VENDETTA, Book 1,
Chapters 9, 10 & 11 first published 1982
in the United Kingdom by
Quality Communications Limited.
DC Comics Inc.
A Warner Communications Company.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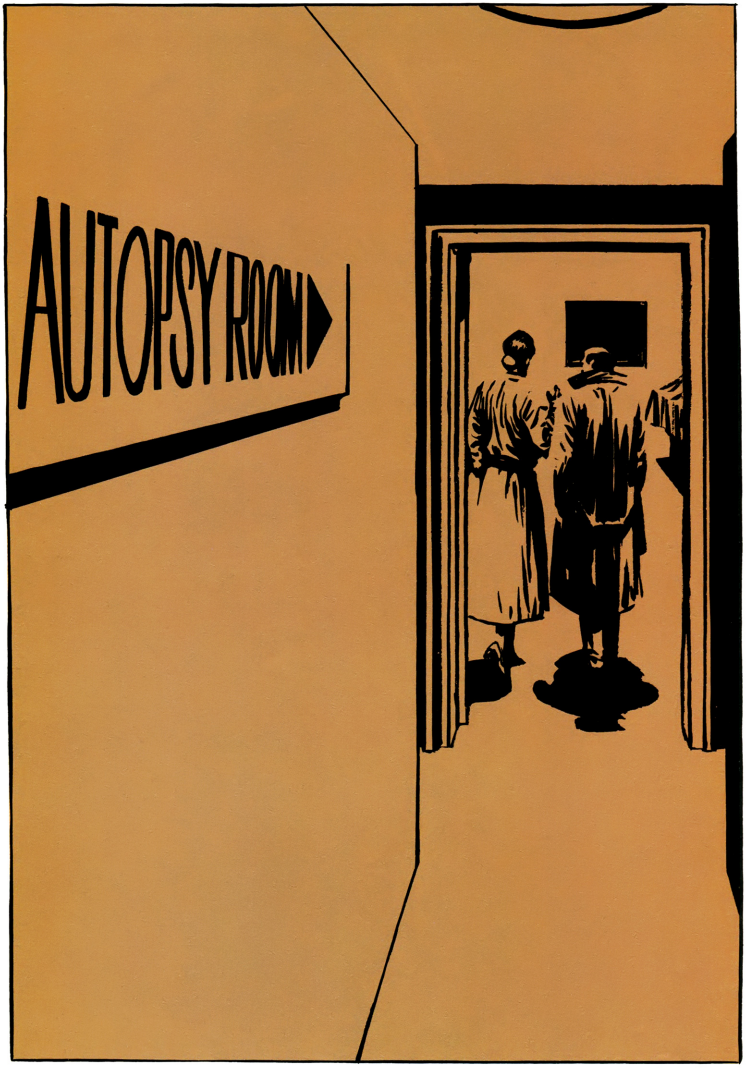
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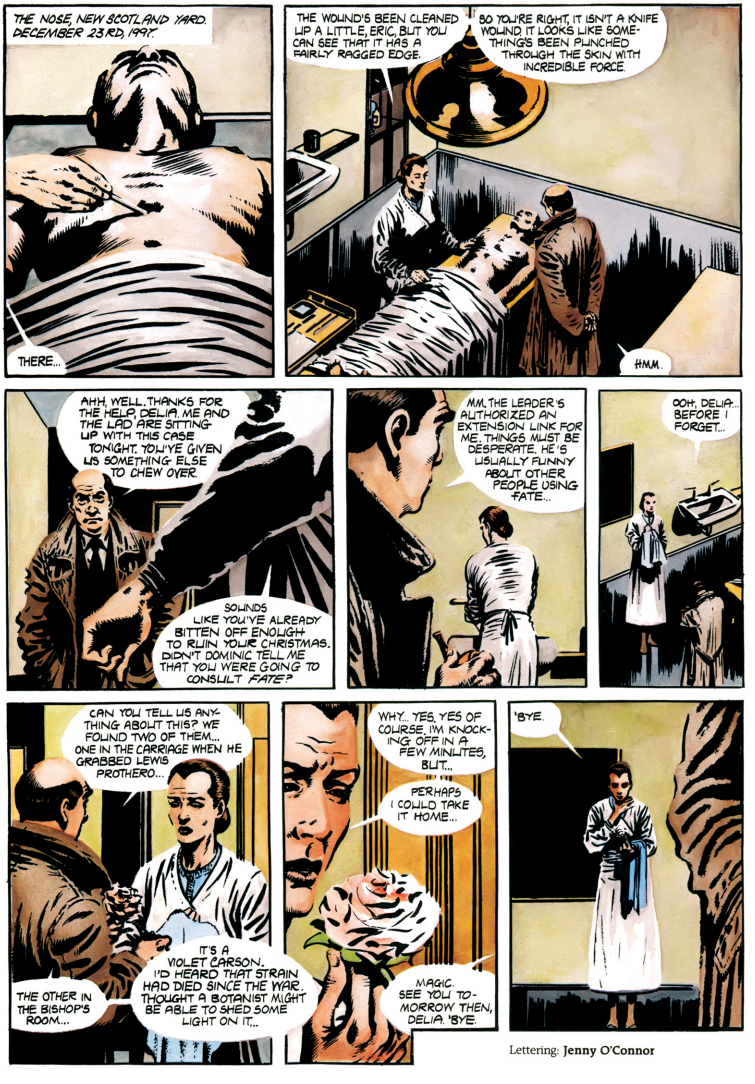
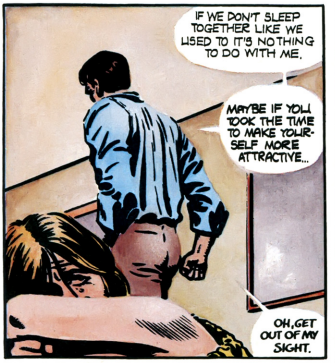

THE NOSE, NEW SCOTLAND YARD. DECEMBER 23RD, 1997.
THERE...
THE WOUND'S BEEN CLEANED UP A LITTLE, ERIC, BUT YOU CAN SEE THAT IT HAS A FAIRLY RAGGED EDGE.
SO YOU'RE RIGHT, IT ISN'T A KNIFE WOUND IT LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING'S BEEN PUNCHED THROUGH THE SKIN WITH INCREDIBLE FORCE.
HMM.
AHH, WELL..THANKS FOR THE HELP, DELIA. ME AND THE LAD ARE SITTING UP WITH THIS CASE TONIGHT. YOU'VE GIVEN US SOMETHING ELSE TO CHEW OVER.
SOUNDS LIKE YOU'VE ALREADY BITTEN OFF ENOUGH TO RUIN YOUR CHRISTMAS. DIDN'T DOMINIC TELL ME THAT YOU WERE GOING TO CONSULT FATE?
MM. THE LEADER'S AUTHORIZED AN EXTENSION LINK FOR ME. THINGS MUST BE DESPERATE. HE'S USUALLY FUNNY ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE USING FATE..
OOH, DELIA.. BEFORE I FORGET...
CAN YOU TELL US ANYTHING ABOUT THIS? WE FOUND TWO OF THEM... ONE IN THE CARRIAGE WHEN HE GRABBED LEWIS PROTHERO...
IT'S A VIOLET CARSON. I'D HEARD THAT STRAIN HAD DIED SINCE THE WAR. THOUGHT A BOTANIST MIGHT BE ABLE TO SHED SOME LIGHT ON IT...
THE OTHER IN THE BISHOP'S ROOM...
WHY.. YES, YES OF COURSE. I'M KNOCKING OFF IN A FEW MINUTES, BUT..
PERHAPS I COULD TAKE IT HOME...
MAGIC. SEE YOU TOMORROW THEN, DELIA. 'BYE.
'BYE.

Lettering: **Jenny O'Connor**

THE SHADOW GALLERY.
IT'S WRONG, V.
Chapter Nine
VIOLENCE
V, IT'S ME AS WELL! I'M INVOLVED. YOU INVOLVED ME.
V, I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE GOING TO KILL HIM!
KILLING'S WRONG.
ISN'T IT?
WHY ARE YOU ASKING ME?
AND AS FOR ME INVOLVING YOU, I SEEM TO REMEMBER THAT YOU WERE THE ONE ANXIOUS TO MAKE A DEAL.
I DIDN'T KNOW THAT YOU WERE GOING TO...
YOU WERE THE ONE WHO...
OH CHRIST, V...
"THERE IS MORE BEHIND AND INSIDE V THAN ANY OF US HAD SUSPECTED. NOT WHO, BUT WHAT: WHAT IS SHE."
YOU'LL LEARN, EVEY...

YOU'LL LEARN.
KNIGHTSBRIDGE. MR. AND MRS. ALMOND.
DEREK?
I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT, ROSEMARY...
DEREK...
LEAVE IT.
DEREK, I WON'T!
DEREK, WE CAN'T JUST CARRY ON AND NOT TALK ABOUT IT...
YOU DON'T TALK TO ME, YOU DON'T EAT WITH ME, YOU DON'T HAVE SEX WITH...
NOW YOU LISTEN! I DON'T HAVE TO TAKE ANY OF THIS CRAP FROM YOU! NOT ANY OF IT!
I HAVE THAT FAT BASTARD RIDING ME ALL DAY ABOUT THIS TERRORIST CASE, I HAVE...
AH UH
AH UH

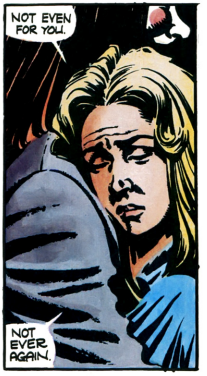
ROSEMARY, WILL YOU! SHUT UP!


IF WE DON'T SLEEP TOGETHER LIKE WE USED TO IT'S NOTHING TO DO WITH ME.
MAYBE IF YOU TOOK THE TIME TO MAKE YOURSELF MORE ATTRACTIVE...
OH, GET OUT OF MY SIGHT.

I'LL BE UP LATER.
I'M CLEANING MY GUN.

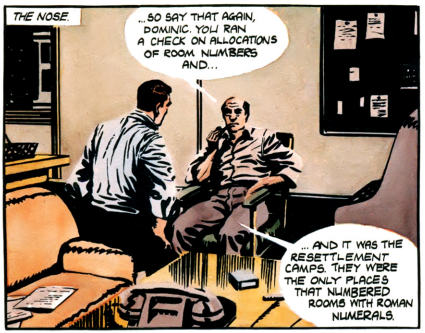
THE SHADOW GALLERY

V...
I'M SORRY. I WAS TRYING TO GET OUT OF TAKING THE BLAME.
I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT. BUT I WON'T DO ANY MORE KILLING, Y...

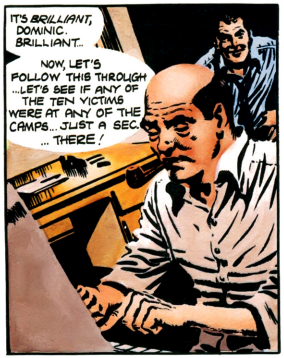

NOT EVEN FOR YOU.
NOT EVER AGAIN.

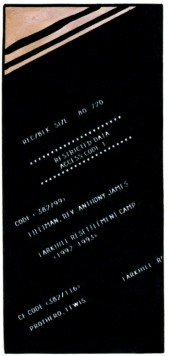
PLAISTOW. 9:17 P.M.

THE SHADOW GALLERY
"LET'S DIG AN ENORMOUS CASTLE!" CRIED MOON-FACE. "THEN WE CAN ALL SIT ON THE TOP OF IT WHEN THE SEA COMES IN."
"WE CAN'T," SAID SILKY, SUDDENLY LOOKING SAD. "WHY NOT? WHY NOT?" CRIED JO IN SURPRISE. "ISN'T THIS THE LAND OF DO-AS-YOU-PLEASE?!"
"YES," SAID SILKY. "BUT IT'S TIME WE WENT BACK TO THE FARAWAY TREE. THIS LAND WILL SOON BE MOVING ON--AND NICE AS IT IS, WE DON'T WANT TO LIVE HERE FOREVER."
"GRACIOUS NO," SAID JO. "OUR MOTHER AND FATHER COULDN'T POSSIBLY DO WITHOUT US..."


THE NOSE
...SO SAY THAT AGAIN, DOMINIC. YOU RAN A CHECK ON ALLOCATIONS OF ROOM NUMBERS AND...
...AND IT WAS THE RESETTLEMENT CAMPS. THEY WERE THE ONLY PLACES THAT NUMBERED ROOMS WITH ROMAN NUMERALS.

YOU SEE, YOU SAID THAT IT WAS THE "V" THING THAT WAS THE KEY TO IT ALL, AND LEWIS PROTHERO KEPT TALKING ABOUT "ROOM FIVE" AND IN ROMAN NUMERALS FIVE IS V, AND...
ER.. WELL, I MEAN, IT'S ONLY A SORT OF THEORY. I DON'T SUPPOSE IT MEANS ANYTHING...


IT'S BRILLIANT, DOMINIC. BRILLIANT..
NOW, LET'S FOLLOW THIS THROUGH ...LET'S SEE IF ANY OF THE TEN VICTIMS WERE AT ANY OF THE CAMPS... JUST A SEC. ... THERE!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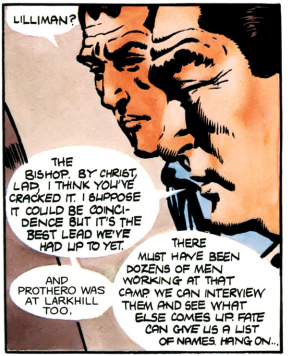
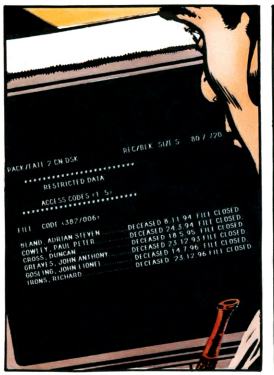
ACCESS DATA
ACCESS CODES
CODE: 5827/DOS:
LILLIMAN, BILY ANTHONY JAMES
LARKHILL RESETTLEMENT CAMP
1900 / 1945
LARKHILL RC
CX CODE 5827/LIB:
PROTHERO, LEWIS


LILLIMAN?
THE BISHOP. BY CHRIST, LAD, I THINK YOU'VE CRACKED IT. I SUPPOSE IT COULD BE COINCIDENCE BUT IT'S THE BEST LEAD WE'VE HAD UP TO YET.
AND PROTHERO WAS AT LARKHILL TOO.
THERE MUST HAVE BEEN DOZENS OF MEN WORKING AT THAT CAMP WE CAN INTERVIEW THEM AND SEE WHAT ELSE COMES UP. FATE CAN GIVE US A LIST OF NAMES. HANG ON...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ACCESS CODES
FILE CODE 5827/DOS
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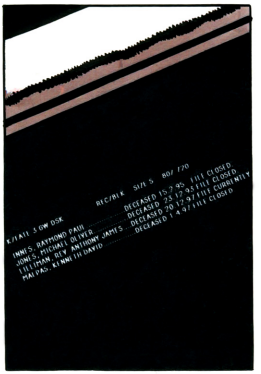
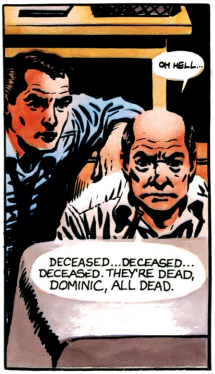
COWLEY, PAUL PETER DECEASED 24 3 94 FILE CLOSED
CROSS, DUNCAN DECEASED 18 5 95 FILE CLOSED
GREAVES, JOHN ANTHONY DECEASED 23 12 93 FILE CLOSED
GOULING, JOHN LIONEL DECEASED 14 7 96 FILE CLOSED
IRONS, RICHARD DECEASED 23 12 96 FILE CLOSED

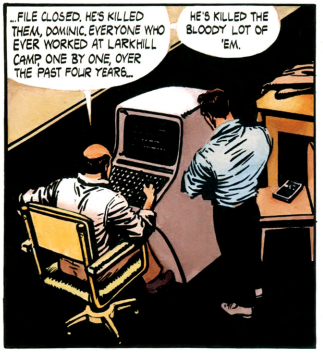

K/ALL 1 CW DSK RECORD SIZE 80 / 720
INNES, RAYMOND PAUL DECEASED 15 7 95 FILE CLOSED
JONES, MICHAEL OLIVER DECEASED 23 12 93 FILE CLOSED
LILLIMAN, BILY ANTHONY JAMES DECEASED 20 12 93 FILE CURRENTLY
MACKAY, KENNETH DAVID DECEASED 1 4 97 FILE CLOSED

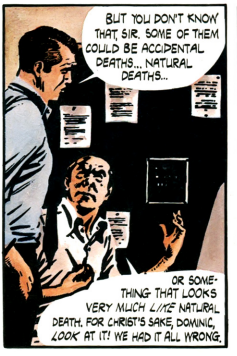

OH HELL...
DECEASED...DECEASED... DECEASED. THEY'RE DEAD, DOMINIC, ALL DEAD.

PLAISTOW:
FNFF
FNFF
ROSES
IT'S YOU, ISN'T IT? YOU'VE COME...
YOU'VE COME TO KILL ME.
YES.
OH THANK GOD.
THANK GOD.

DECEMBER 23RD, 1997. KNIGHTSBRIDGE. MR. AND MRS. ALMOND...
DEREK? WHAT...
DEREK? DEREK, DON'T...
BANG.
DON'T WORRY, ROSE. I DIDN'T LOAD IT.
NOT TONIGHT.
Chapter Ten
VENOM
THE NOSE. NEW SCOTLAND YARD. MR. FINCH AND DOMINIC...
QUINN, ANDREW EAMON. DECEASED 25.12.93. FILE CLOSED. ROUSE, WILLIAM. DECEASED 18.7.97. FILE CLOSED. RAPPITT, PETER KEVIN. DECEASED 5.11.94...

Lettering: **Jenny O'Connor**

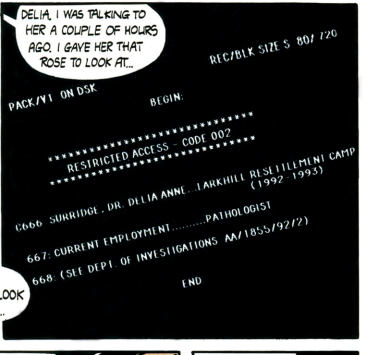

...FILE CLOSED. HE'S KILLED THEM, DOMINIC, EVERYONE WHO EVER WORKED AT LARKHILL CAMP ONE BY ONE, OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS...
HE'S KILLED THE BLOODY LOT OF 'EM.


BUT YOU DON'T KNOW THAT, SIR. SOME OF THEM COULD BE ACCIDENTAL DEATHS... NATURAL DEATHS...
OR SOMETHING THAT LOOKS VERY MUCH LIKE NATURAL DEATH. FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, DOMINIC, LOOK AT IT! WE HAD IT ALL WRONG.

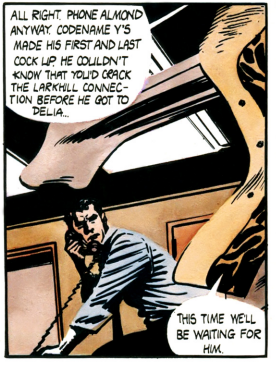
WE THOUGHT HE APPEARED OUT OF THE BLUE TWO MONTHS AGO.
... AND ALL THIS TIME... OH GOD, ALL THOSE PEOPLE. THAT'S MONSTROUS. THAT'S PURE BLOODY EVIL.

THIS IS A LIST OF ALL THE MEN AT LARKHILL. WERE THERE ANY WOMEN?
I DON'T KNOW. CHECK IT WITH FATE.

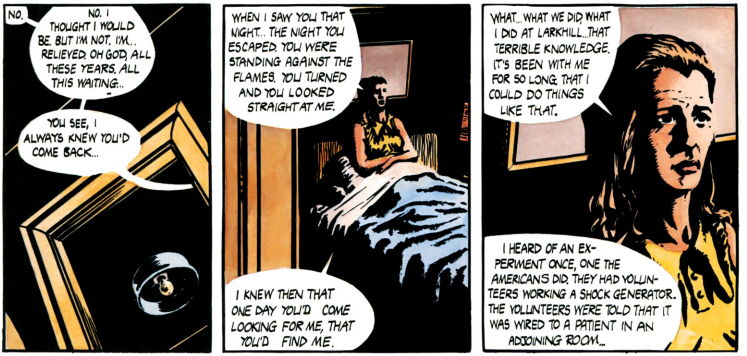
HE WAS AT LARKHILL. HE MUST HAVE BEEN, AND NOW EVERYBODY WHO COULD HAVE TOLD US ANYTHING...
OH CHRIST, MR. FINCH. LOOK AT THIS...

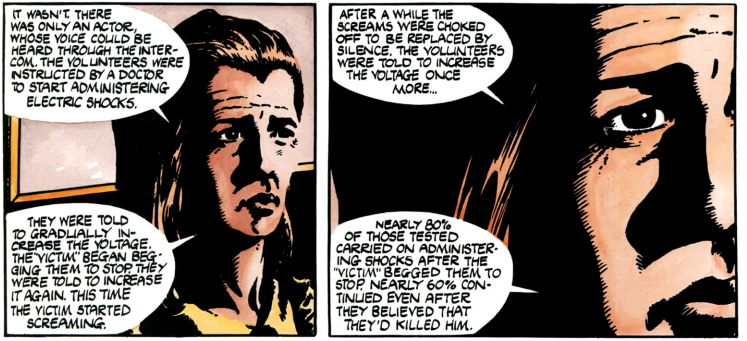

DELIA, I WAS TALKING TO HER A COUPLE OF HOURS AGO. I GAVE HER THAT ROSE TO LOOK AT...
REC/BLK SIZE 5 BDI 720
PACK/V1 ON DSK
BEGIN:
RESTRICTED ACCESS - CODE 002
666: SURRIDGE, DR. DELIA ANNE...LARKHILL RESETTLEMENT CAMP (1992 - 1993)
667: CURRENT EMPLOYMENT..... PATHOLOGIST
668: (SEE DEPT. OF INVESTIGATIONS, AA/1855/92/2)
END

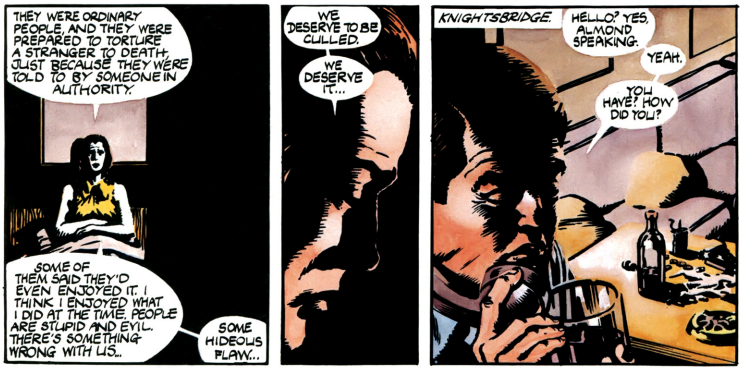
PHONE HER, DOMINIC, AND THEN PHONE ALMOND.
I'M TRYING. THE DOCTOR'S LINE'S ENGAGED..


ALL RIGHT. PHONE ALMOND ANYWAY. CODENAME Y'S MADE HIS FIRST AND LAST COCK UP. HE COULDN'T KNOW THAT YOU'D CRACK THE LARKHILL CONNECTION BEFORE HE GOT TO DELIA...
THIS TIME WE'LL BE WAITING FOR HIM.

PLAISTOW, DR. DELIA SURRIDGE...
ARE YOU AFRAID?


NO.
NO. I THOUGHT I WOULD BE. BUT I'M NOT. I'M... RELIEVED. OH GOD, ALL THESE YEARS. ALL THIS WAITING...
YOU SEE, I ALWAYS KNEW YOU'D COME BACK...
WHEN I SAW YOU THAT NIGHT... THE NIGHT YOU ESCAPED. YOU WERE STANDING AGAINST THE FLAMES. YOU TURNED AND YOU LOOKED STRAIGHT AT ME.
I KNEW THEN THAT ONE DAY YOU'D COME LOOKING FOR ME, THAT YOU'D FIND ME.
WHAT... WHAT WE DID. WHAT I DID AT LARKHILL. THAT TERRIBLE KNOWLEDGE. IT'S BEEN WITH ME FOR SO LONG. THAT I COULD DO THINGS LIKE THAT.
I HEARD OF AN EXPERIMENT ONCE, ONE THE AMERICANS DID. THEY HAD VOLUNTEERS WORKING A SHOCK GENERATOR. THE VOLUNTEERS WERE TOLD THAT IT WAS WIRED TO A PATIENT IN AN ADJOINING ROOM...


IT WASN'T THERE WAS ONLY AN ACTOR, WHOSE VOICE COULD BE HEARD THROUGH THE INTERCOM. THE VOLUNTEERS WERE INSTRUCTED BY A DOCTOR TO START ADMINISTERING ELECTRIC SHOCKS.
THEY WERE TOLD TO GRADUALLY INCREASE THE VOLTAGE. THE "VICTIM" BEGAN BEGGING THEM TO STOP. THEY WERE TOLD TO INCREASE IT AGAIN. THIS TIME THE VICTIM STARTED SCREAMING.
AFTER A WHILE THE SCREAMS WERE CHOKED OFF TO BE REPLACED BY SILENCE. THE VOLUNTEERS WERE TOLD TO INCREASE THE VOLTAGE ONCE MORE...
NEARLY 80% OF THOSE TESTED CARRIED ON ADMINISTERING SHOCKS AFTER THE "VICTIM" BEGGED THEM TO STOP. NEARLY 60% CONTINUED EVEN AFTER THEY BELIEVED THAT THEY'D KILLED HIM.


THEY WERE ORDINARY PEOPLE, AND THEY WERE PREPARED TO TORTURE A STRANGER TO DEATH, JUST BECAUSE THEY WERE TOLD TO BY SOMEONE IN AUTHORITY.
SOME OF THEM SAID THEY'D EVEN ENJOYED IT. I THINK I ENJOYED WHAT I DID AT THE TIME. PEOPLE ARE STUPID AND EVIL. THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH US...
SOME HIDEOUS FLAW...
WE DESERVE TO BE CULLED.
WE DESERVE IT...
KNIGHTSBRIDGE.
HELLO? YES, ALMOND SPEAKING.
YEAH.
YOU HAVE? HOW DID YOU?

WAIT A MINUTE. YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT DELIA SURRIDGE? THE DOCTOR!
BUT WHAT'S SHE GOT TO DO WITH ...NO.
NO, NO, ALL RIGHT. LATER. YEAH.
YEAH, I KNOW THE ADDRESS. IN PLAISTOW.
YEAH, PHONE THROUGH DOWNSTAIRS AND ASK THEM TO SEND A SQUAD OVER. CHOP-CHOP.
YEAH, I'M ALREADY ON MY WAY. YEAH. 'BYE.
IT'S FUNNY.
I WAS GIVEN ONE OF YOUR ROSES TODAY. ERIC FINCH GAVE IT TO ME. HE'S WITH THE NOSE, THE INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT. HE'S AFTER YOU.
I WASN'T SURE THAT YOU WERE THE TERRORIST, NOT UNTIL I SAW THE ROSE. WHAT A STRANGE COINCIDENCE. THAT I SHOULD BE GIVEN IT TODAY...
THERE IS NO COINCIDENCE, DELIA. ONLY THE ILLUSION OF COINCIDENCE.
I HAVE ANOTHER ROSE...

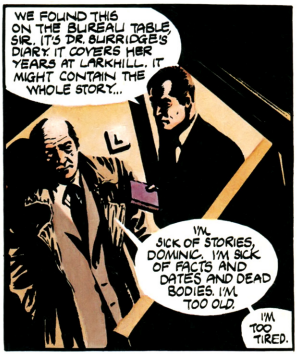
IT'S FOR YOU.
THEN, YOU ARE GOING TO KILL ME.
I KILLED YOU TEN MINUTES AGO, WHILE YOU WERE ASLEEP.
IS THERE ANY PAIN?
NO. NO PAIN.
GOOD. THAT'S GOOD.
PLEASE?.. CAN I....
CAN I SEE YOUR FACE AGAIN?
IT'S BEAUTIFUL...

DON'T MOVE AN INCH, YOU BLOODY BASTARD.
YOU DIDN'T HEAR ME ARRIVE, DID YOU? DIDN'T KNOW WE'D RUMBLED YOU...
IT'S ALL FINISHED, CHUMMY. ALL OF IT.
THE OLD MAN TOLD ME IT WAS MY HEAD OR YOURS... AND WHAT DO YOU KNOW? IT'S YOURS!
BECAUSE YOU'RE STANDING OVER THERE WITH YOUR BLOODY FANCY KNIVES AND YOUR BLOODY FANCY KARATE GIMMICKS...
AND I'VE GOT A GUN.

CHRISTMAS EVE, 1997. 12:04 AM.

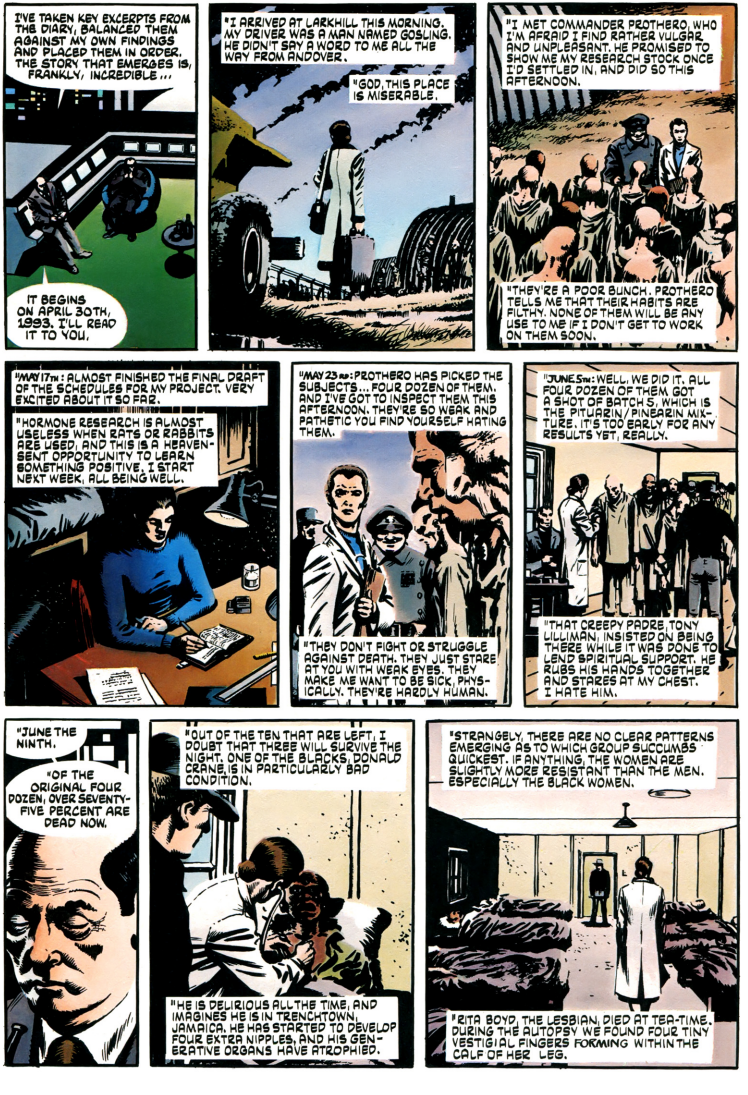
MR. FINCH... ER... SOMEBODY'S GONE TO TELL MRS. ALMOND, AND, UH...
SIR, IS THERE ANYTHING...

I'LL SEE HIM DEAD FOR THIS, DOMINIC.
SHE WAS A GOOD WOMAN. SHE WORKED ALL HOURS AS A DOCTOR BEFORE SHE STARTED IN PATHOLOGY SHE CARED ABOUT PEOPLE.
I'VE SEEN HER TREATING LITTLE KIDS WHO...
BY CHRIST, DOMINIC, I'LL SEE HIM DEAD FOR THIS.


WE FOUND THIS ON THE BUREAU TABLE, SIR. IT'S DR. BURRIDGE'S DIARY. IT COVERS HER YEARS AT LARKHILL. IT MIGHT CONTAIN THE WHOLE STORY...
I'M SICK OF STORIES, DOMINIC. I'M SICK OF FACTS AND DATES AND DEAD BODIES. I'M TOO OLD.
I'M TOO TIRED.

DECEMBER 26TH, 1997. 10:58 P.M. MR. FINCH REPORTS:
IT'S A VENDETTA, LEADER.
Chapter Eleven
THE VORTEX
AT AROUND TEN O'CLOCK LAST NIGHT, CODENAME "V" ENTERED THE HOME OF PATHOLOGIST DR. DELIA SURRIDGE AND INJECTED HER WITH AN AS-YET-UNIDENTIFIED POISON. DR. SURRIDGE IS DEAD.
IT IS POSSIBLE THAT HE INJECTED HER WHILE SHE SLEPT. THERE WAS NO SIGN OF A STRUGGLE.
BEFORE HE COULD LEAVE THE PREMISES, CODENAME "V" WAS SURPRISED BY THE ARRIVAL OF MR. ALMOND. MR. ALMOND WAS ARMED WITH A REVOLVER.
APPARENTLY HE HAD FORGOTTEN TO LOAD IT. CODENAME "V" STRUCK MR. ALMOND WITH AN EDGED IMPLEMENT, PROBABLY A KNIFE.
MR. ALMOND IS ALSO DEAD.
MR. ALMOND WAS VISITING THE DOCTOR TO WARN HER THAT MY DEPARTMENT HAD ESTABLISHED A LINK BETWEEN THE ABDUCTION OF LEWIS PROTHERO AND THE KILLING OF BISHOP LILLIMAN.
BOTH OF THEM HAD BEEN EMPLOYED AT LARKHILL RESETTLEMENT CAMP DURING 1992 AND '93. SO HAD DR. SURRIDGE. WE TRIED TO WARN HER.
WE WERE TOO LATE.
AFTERWARDS, HOWEVER, WE DID FIND THE DOCTOR'S DIARY. IT'S A FIVE-YEAR DIARY AND IT DEALS, PARTICULARLY WITH HER TIME AT LARKHILL. SINCE THIS MORNING I'VE READ IT SEVEN TIMES.
... AND I STILL DON'T KNOW WHO CODENAME "V" IS.
... BUT I THINK I KNOW WHAT HE IS.

Lettering: **Jenny O'Connor** **Steve Craddock**

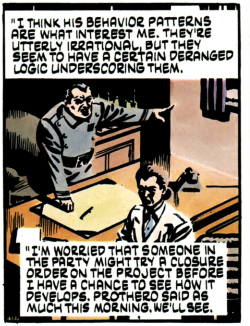

I'VE TAKEN KEY EXCERPTS FROM THE DIARY, BALANCED THEM AGAINST MY OWN FINDINGS AND PLACED THEM IN ORDER. THE STORY THAT EMERGES IS, FRANKLY, INCREDIBLE...
IT BEGINS ON APRIL 30TH, 1993. I'LL READ IT TO YOU.
"I ARRIVED AT LARKHILL THIS MORNING. MY DRIVER WAS A MAN NAMED GOSLING. HE DIDN'T SAY A WORD TO ME ALL THE WAY FROM ANDOVER.
"GOD, THIS PLACE IS MISERABLE.
"I MET COMMANDER PROTHERO, WHO I'M AFRAID I FIND RATHER VULGAR AND UNPLEASANT. HE PROMISED TO SHOW ME MY RESEARCH STOCK ONCE I'D SETTLED IN, AND DID SO THIS AFTERNOON.
"THEY'RE A POOR BUNCH. PROTHERO TELLS ME THAT THEIR HABITS ARE FILTHY. NONE OF THEM WILL BE ANY USE TO ME IF I DON'T GET TO WORK ON THEM SOON.
"MAY 17TH: ALMOST FINISHED THE FINAL DRAFT OF THE SCHEDULES FOR MY PROJECT. VERY EXCITED ABOUT IT SO FAR.
"HORMONE RESEARCH IS ALMOST USELESS WHEN RATS OR RABBITS ARE USED, AND THIS IS A HEAVEN-SENT OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN SOMETHING POSITIVE. I START NEXT WEEK, ALL BEING WELL.
"MAY 23RD: PROTHERO HAS PICKED THE SUBJECTS... FOUR DOZEN OF THEM. AND I'VE GOT TO INSPECT THEM THIS AFTERNOON. THEY'RE SO WEAK AND PATHETIC YOU FIND YOURSELF HATING THEM.
"THEY DON'T FIGHT OR STRUGGLE AGAINST DEATH. THEY JUST STARE AT YOU WITH WEAK EYES. THEY MAKE ME WANT TO BE SICK, PHYSICALLY. THEY'RE HARDLY HUMAN.
"JUNE 5TH: WELL, WE DID IT. ALL FOUR DOZEN OF THEM. GOT A SHOT OF BATCH 5, WHICH IS THE PITUARIN/PINEARIN MIXTURE. IT'S TOO EARLY FOR ANY RESULTS YET, REALLY.
"THAT CREEPY PADRE, TONY LILLIMAN, INSISTED ON BEING THERE WHILE IT WAS DONE TO LEND SPIRITUAL SUPPORT. HE RUBS HIS HANDS TOGETHER AND STARES AT MY CHEST. I HATE HIM.
"JUNE THE NINTH.
"OF THE ORIGINAL FOUR DOZEN, OVER SEVENTY-FIVE PERCENT ARE DEAD NOW.
"OUT OF THE TEN THAT ARE LEFT, I DOUBT THAT THREE WILL SURVIVE THE NIGHT. ONE OF THE BLACKS, DONALD CRANE, IS IN PARTICULARLY BAD CONDITION.
"HE IS DELIRIOUS ALL THE TIME, AND IMAGINES HE IS IN TRENCHTOWN, JAMAICA. HE HAS STARTED TO DEVELOP FOUR EXTRA NIPPLES, AND HIS GENERATIVE ORGANS HAVE ATROPHIED.
"STRANGELY, THERE ARE NO CLEAR PATTERNS EMERGING AS TO WHICH GROUP SUCCUMBS QUICKEST. IF ANYTHING, THE WOMEN ARE SLIGHTLY MORE RESISTANT THAN THE MEN. ESPECIALLY THE BLACK WOMEN.
"RITA BOYD, THE LESBIAN, DIED AT TEA-TIME. DURING THE AUTOPSY WE FOUND FOUR TINY VESTIGIAL FINGERS FORMING WITHIN THE CALF OF HER LEG.

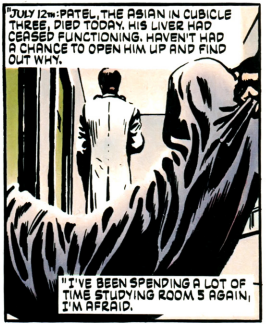
"JUNE 18TH: ONLY FIVE LEFT NOW. TWO MEN AND THREE WOMEN, WHICH TENDS TO CONTRADICT MY ENTRY OF THE 9TH OF JUNE. WE'VE HOUSED THEM IN INDIVIDUAL CUBICLES AT THE MEDICAL BLOCK.
"THE MAN IN ROOM 5 IS A REALLY FASCINATING CASE.

"PHYSICALLY, THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ANYTHING WRONG WITH HIM. NO CELLULAR ANOMALIES, NOTHING.
"BUT HE'S QUITE INSANE. BATCH 5 SEEMS TO HAVE BROUGHT ON SOME KIND OF PSYCHOTIC BREAKDOWN.

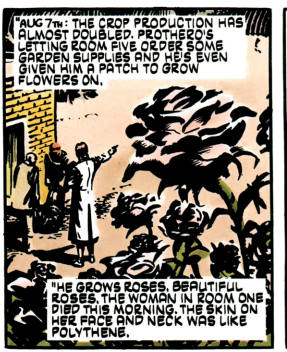
"STRANGELY, HE'S DEVELOPED ONE OF THOSE CURIOUS SIDE EFFECTS WHICH SEEM TO AFFLICT CERTAIN CATEGORIES OF SCHIZOPHRENIC:
"HIS PERSONALITY HAS BECOME TOTALLY MAGNETIC. HE SAYS VERY LITTLE... BUT THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THE WAY HE LOOKS AT YOU.

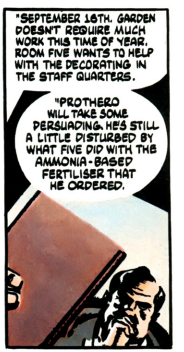
"HE LOOKED AT ME TODAY AS IF I WERE SOME SORT OF INSECT. HE LOOKED AT ME AS IF HE FELT SORRY FOR ME.
"HIS FACE IS VERY UGLY. I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT ALL EVENING.


"I THINK HIS BEHAVIOR PATTERNS ARE WHAT INTEREST ME. THEY'RE UTTERLY IRRATIONAL, BUT THEY SEEM TO HAVE A CERTAIN DERANGED LOGIC UNDERSCORING THEM.
"I'M WORRIED THAT SOMEONE IN THE PARTY MIGHT TRY A CLOSURE ORDER ON THE PROJECT BEFORE I HAVE A CHANCE TO SEE HOW IT DEVELOPS. PROTHERO SAID AS MUCH THIS MORNING. WE'LL SEE.

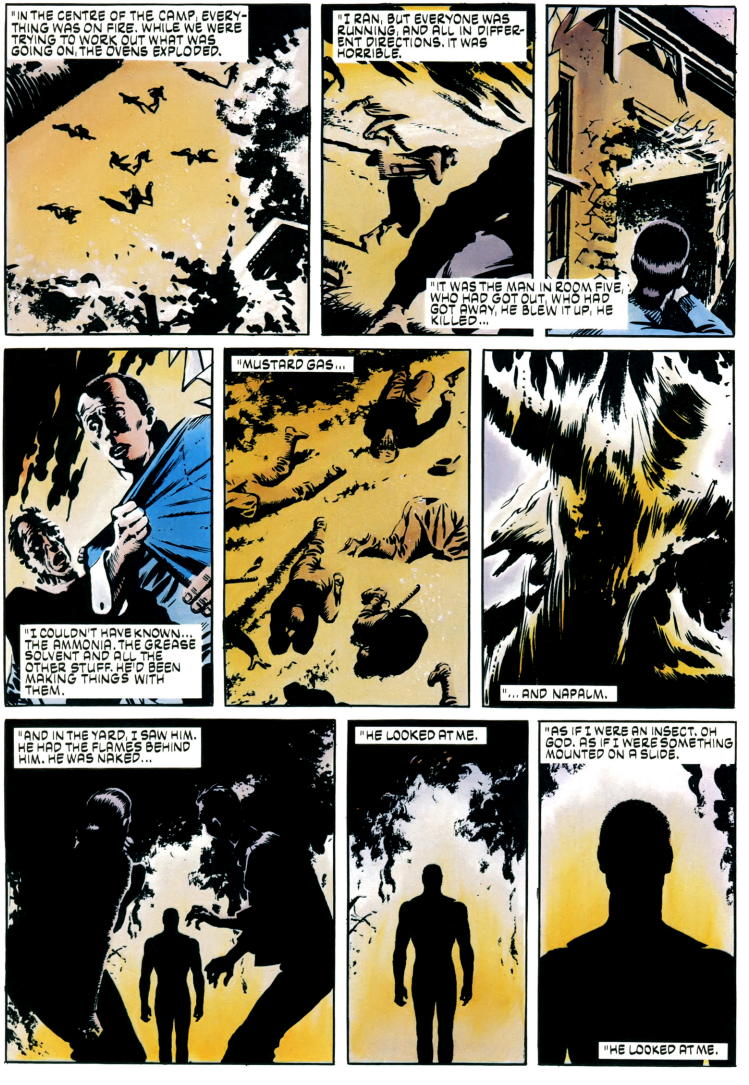

"JULY 12TH: PATEL, THE ASIAN IN CUBICLE THREE, DIED TODAY. HIS LIVER HAD CEASED FUNCTIONING. HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE TO OPEN HIM UP AND FIND OUT WHY.
"I'VE BEEN SPENDING A LOT OF TIME STUDYING ROOM 5 AGAIN. I'M AFRAID.

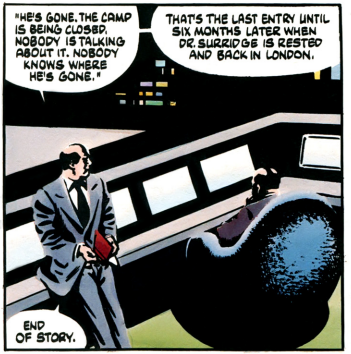
"I'M GLAD WE LET HIM HAVE A GO AT THE GARDENING PROJECT. PROTHERO WAS RELUCTANT AT FIRST, I SUPPOSE IT'S BECAUSE WITH THE FOOD SHORTAGE, THESE PLACES HAVE TO BE SELF-SUPPORTING.
"HE'S DELIGHTED NOW, THE FAT TOAD. ROOM FIVE'S TURNED OUT TO BE A GENIUS AT GARDENING.
"HE'S SORTED OUT THE WHITEFLY AND IT LOOKS LIKE BEING A GOOD YIELD.


"AUG 7TH: THE CROP PRODUCTION HAS ALMOST DOUBLED. PROTHERO'S LETTING ROOM FIVE ORDER SOME GARDEN SUPPLIES AND HE'S EVEN GIVEN HIM A PATCH TO GROW FLOWERS ON.
"HE GROWS ROSES. BEAUTIFUL ROSES. THE WOMAN IN ROOM ONE DIED THIS MORNING. THE SKIN ON HER FACE AND NECK WAS LIKE POLYTHENE.


"SEPTEMBER 16TH. GARDEN DOESN'T REQUIRE MUCH WORK THIS TIME OF YEAR. ROOM FIVE WANTS TO HELP WITH THE DECORATING IN THE STAFF QUARTERS.
"PROTHERO WILL TAKE SOME PERSUADING. HE'S STILL A LITTLE DISTURBED BY WHAT FIVE DID WITH THE AMMONIA-BASED FERTILISER THAT HE ORDERED.

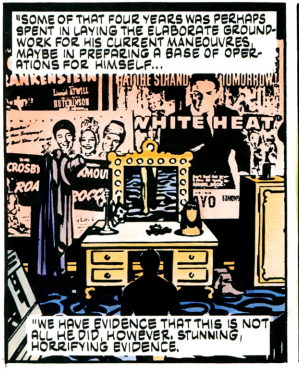
"IT'S ARRANGED IN PILES AROUND HIS CELL. IT MAKES A KIND OF GEOMETRIC SHAPE. HE SITS MOTIONLESS FOR HOURS IN THE CENTRE OF IT. THE AMMONIA STENCH IS TERRIBLE.
"SEPTEMBER 29TH: PROTHERO ON MY BACK ABOUT FIVE'S GREASE SOLVENT. HE ORDERS FOURTEEN GALLONS OF IT AND THEN SWIPES HALF TO DECORATE HIS CELL. PROTHERO PICKS HIS NOSE.
"NOV. 5TH: HIS CUBICLE IS COVERED WITH SO MUCH JUNK. THE AMMONIA SMELLS TERRIBLE AND THERE IS A SORT OF SWIMMING POOL SMELL TOO. LORD KNOWS WHERE THAT COMES FROM.
"THE PATTERNS OF SOLVENT AND FERTILISER ON THE FLOOR OF FIVE'S CUBICLE ARE BECOMING SO INTRICATE. I'VE GOT TO FOLLOW THIS OBSESSION TO THE END. IT MIGHT BE A NEW SYNDROME.
"I'M SURE THAT IN HIS MIND ALL THIS MAKES PERFECT SENSE. I'M SURE OF IT."
THE NEXT ENTRY I WANT TO READ WAS MADE ON DECEMBER 24TH, 1933, AND IT REFERS TO THE EVENTS OF THE PREVIOUS DAY.
IT STARTS WITH THE WORDS "HE LOOKED AT," WHICH ARE CROSSED OUT. THEN IT SAYS "NO. CAN'T WRITE ABOUT IT YET. CAN'T HOLD," AND THEN ANOTHER GAP.
WHEN IT RESUMES, IT'S IN A DIFFERENT COLORED INK...
"I WAS IN THE MESS. IT WAS ABOUT HALF PAST TEN WHEN WE HEARD THE FIRST EXPLOSION.
"WE RAN TO THE DOOR TO SEE. LUCKILY, I WAS RIGHT AT THE BACK.
"THE ONES AT THE FRONT RAN STRAIGHT INTO THE GAS. IT WAS HORRIBLE.
"A FEW OF US WENT OUT THROUGH THE REAR DOOR TO AVOID THE GAS. YOU COULD HEAR PEOPLE SCREAMING EVERYWHERE.
"MEN SCREAMING. I HATE THAT. I HATE THE SOUND OF MEN SCREAMING.


"IN THE CENTRE OF THE CAMP, EVERYTHING WAS ON FIRE. WHILE WE WERE TRYING TO WORK OUT WHAT WAS GOING ON, THE OVENS EXPLODED.
"I RAN, BUT EVERYONE WAS RUNNING, AND ALL IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS. IT WAS HORRIBLE.
"IT WAS THE MAN IN ROOM FIVE, WHO HAD GOT OUT. WHO HAD GOT AWAY. HE BLEW IT UP. HE KILLED...
"I COULDN'T HAVE KNOWN... THE AMMONIA, THE GREASE SOLVENT AND ALL THE OTHER STUFF. HE'D BEEN MAKING THINGS WITH THEM.
"MUSTARD GAS...
"... AND NAPALM.
"AND IN THE YARD, I SAW HIM. HE HAD THE FLAMES BEHIND HIM. HE WAS NAKED...
"HE LOOKED AT ME.
"AS IF I WERE AN INSECT. OH GOD. AS IF I WERE SOMETHING MOUNTED ON A SLIDE.
"HE LOOKED AT ME.


"HE'S GONE. THE CAMP IS BEING CLOSED. NOBODY IS TALKING ABOUT IT. NOBODY KNOWS WHERE HE'S GONE."
THAT'S THE LAST ENTRY UNTIL SIX MONTHS LATER WHEN DR. SURRIDGE IS RESTED AND BACK IN LONDON.
END OF STORY.

EXCEPT THAT IT WASN'T, WAS IT? WHAT HAPPENED TO THE MAN IN ROOM FIVE? WHAT DID HE DO IN THE FOUR YEARS FOLLOWING HIS ESCAPE FROM LARKHILL?

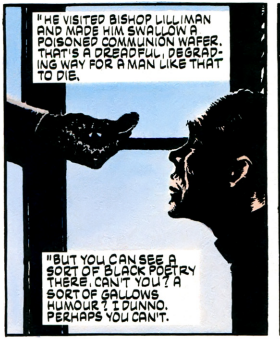
"HOW DID HE BECOME CODE-NAME 'V'?

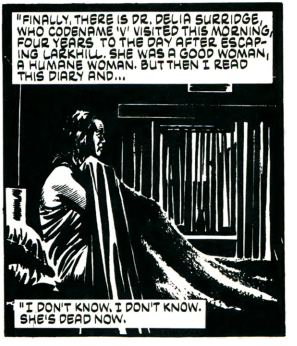

"SOME OF THAT FOUR YEARS WAS PERHAPS SPENT IN LAYING THE ELABORATE GROUNDWORK FOR HIS CURRENT MANEOUVRES. MAYBE IN PREPARING A BASE OF OPERATIONS FOR HIMSELF...
WHITE HEAT
"WE HAVE EVIDENCE THAT THIS IS NOT ALL HE DID, HOWEVER. STUNNING, HORRIFYING EVIDENCE.

"BETWEEN 1993 AND 1997, OVER FORTY PEOPLE WHO WERE PREVIOUSLY AT LARKHILL MET WITH WHAT WERE BELIEVED TO BE ACCIDENTAL DEATHS. EVENTUALLY, ONLY THREE REMAINED.
"THE THREE HE'D BEEN SAVING UNTIL LAST.

"HE ABDUCTED LEWIS PROTHERO, THE CAMP COMMANDER WHO HAD CHOSEN HIM TO RECEIVE BATCH 5, THE PREPARATION THAT HAD DESTROYED HIS MIND.

"PROTHERO IS NOW INCURABLY INSANE.


"HE VISITED BISHOP LILLIMAN AND MADE HIM SWALLOW A POISONED COMMUNION WAFER. THAT'S A DREADFUL, DEGRADING WAY FOR A MAN LIKE THAT TO DIE.
"BUT YOU CAN SEE A SORT OF BLACK POETRY THERE, CAN'T YOU? A SORT OF GALLOWS HUMOUR? I DUNNO. PERHAPS YOU CAN'T.


"FINALLY, THERE IS DR. DELIA SURRIDGE, WHO CODENAME 'V' VISITED THIS MORNING, FOUR YEARS TO THE DAY AFTER ESCAPING LARKHILL. SHE WAS A GOOD WOMAN, A HUMANE WOMAN. BUT THEN I READ THIS DIARY AND...
"I DON'T KNOW. I DON'T KNOW. SHE'S DEAD NOW.

"HER, AND EVERYBODY ELSE WHO WORKED AT LARKHILL. HER AND EVERYBODY ELSE WHO COULD HAVE IDENTIFIED HIM.
"YOU SEE, THERE ARE TWO POSSIBLE MOTIVES HERE. NOT ONE.
"THE FIRST MOTIVE IS REVENGE. HE ESCAPES FROM LARKHILL AND VOWS TO GET EVEN WITH HIS TORMENTORS. THE PARLIAMENT BOMBING AND THE OTHER STUFF IS JUST A SMOKESCREEN.
"THE WHOLE EXERCISE WAS AN ELABORATE, CHILLING VENDETTA.
"THAT'S THE EXPLANATION THAT I FIND MOST REASSURING, FUNNILY ENOUGH.
"BECAUSE THAT MEANS HE'S FINISHED NOW. THAT MEANS IT'S OVER.
"THE SECOND MOTIVE IS MORE SINISTER. LIKE I SAID, EVERYONE WHO COULD HAVE IDENTIFIED HIM IS NOW DEAD.
"WHAT IF HE'S JUST BEEN CLEARING THE GROUND?
"WHAT IF HE'S PLANNING SOMETHING ELSE?
"YOU SEE, THIS DIARY THAT WE FOUND... IT WAS IN FULL VIEW ON THE DOCTOR'S WRITING BUREAU. WE DIDN'T HAVE TO SEARCH FOR IT.
"HE LEFT IT THERE, I'M SURE OF IT. HE WANTED US TO FIND IT. HE WANTED US TO KNOW THE STORY.
"BUT... AND HERE'S A FUNNY THING... HE DIDN'T WANT US TO KNOW *ALL* OF IT.
"WHEN WE FOUND THE DIARY, SOME OF THE PAGES HAD BEEN TORN OUT. IT WASN'T DR. SURRIDGE WHO DID THAT.
"WHAT WAS ON THE MISSING PAGES, EH? HIS NAME? HIS AGE? WHETHER HE WAS JEWISH, OR HOMOSEXUAL, OR BLACK OR WHITE?
"AND FURTHERMORE, IF HIS VENDETTA IS *REALLY* OVER...
"WHY DID HE CARE WHETHER WE KNEW OR NOT?
"HE'S PLAYING GAMES WITH US. HE'S PLAYING GAMES THAT ARE JUST AS ELABORATE AS THE DESIGN ON THE FLOOR OF ROOM FIVE. AS ELABORATE, AND AS MAD...

"... AND AS DEADLY."
YOU SEE, YOU DEAL WITH SOMETHING LIKE THIS... A SCHEME THAT'S AS INGENIOUS AS IT IS IRRATIONAL AND IT'S LIKE WALKING ON QUICK-SAND. YOU GET SLOWLY SUCKED INTO IT...
I MEAN, FATE DOESN'T HAVE ANY RECORDS OF WHAT HAPPENED AT LARKHILL. WE DIDN'T KEEP RECORDS OF WHAT WENT ON AT *ANY* OF THE CAMPS. I SUPPOSE WE WERE BEING CAUTIOUS.
BUT LOOK... FOR ALL WE KNOW, THIS DIARY COULD BE A COMPLETE AND UTTER FAKE. CODENAME "V" COULD HAVE WRITTEN IT HIMSELF.
HE MIGHT NEVER HAVE BEEN AT LARKHILL AT ALL; DO YOU SEE? IT COULD ALL BE ANOTHER SMOKE-SCREEN, A FALSE TRAIL, ANOTHER COVER STORY...
MR. FINCH, CAN YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT ANY-ONE WOULD KILL OVER FIFTY PEOPLE FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN TO PROVIDE HIMSELF WITH A *COVER STORY*?
THE VERY IDEA IS...
... MADNESS.
AH YES.
I SEE...
VERY WELL, I THINK THAT WILL BE ALL, MR. FINCH. ENGLAND PREVAILS.
OH, AND MR. FINCH?
LEADER?
HAPPY CHRISTMAS.
End of Volume One

CHAT

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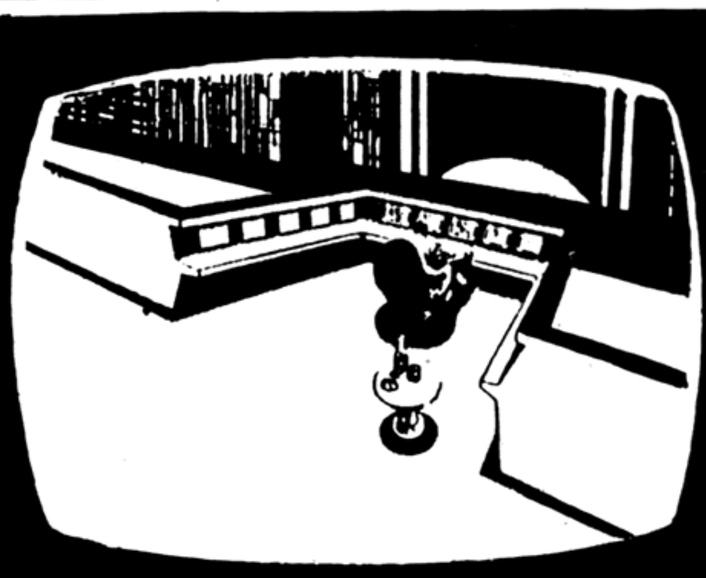

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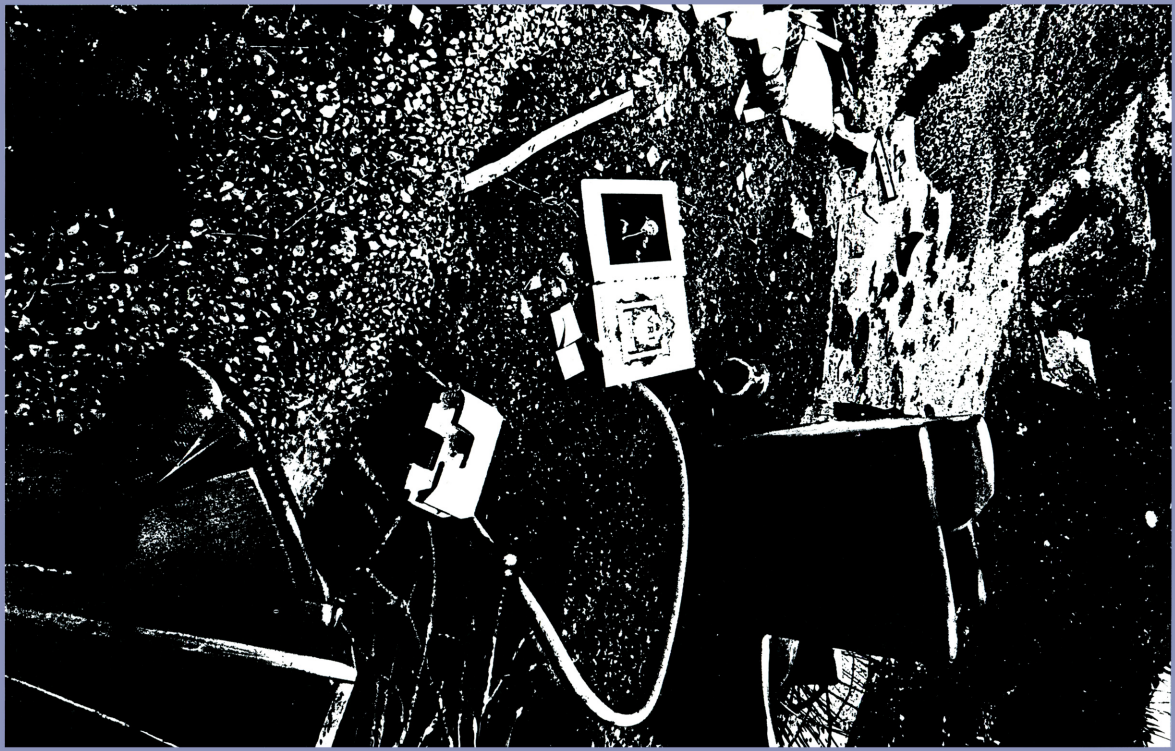

THE PROLETARIAT

REMEMBER, REMEMBER THE 5TH OF NOVEMBER.